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a and stores game transaction information, including records of printed vouchers and pay-out amounts. To cash-out a voucher, the voucher information is entered into a wireless, portable computer device, and relayed to a remote wireless interface connected to the centralized computer. A verification program verifies that the voucher is valid and not paid out. It then updates the voucher record to indicate that the voucher has been paid and transmits the pay-out amount to the wireless, portable computer device, where it is displayed. If a voucher is not valid or already paid out, a denial message is transmitted to the wireless, portable computer device. The system may include a primary network and a secondary network with redundant, cross-referenced voucher databases.--

IN THE CLAIMS

Please replace pending claims 1-4, 6-9, 13-14, 16-17, 19, 21-22 with the following amended claims:

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1. (Amended) A method for validating gaming vouchers dispensed from an electronic gaming machine, comprising the steps of:
 - receiving voucher identification information at a wireless, portable computer device, said voucher identification information corresponding to a pay-out voucher dispensed from an electronic gaming machine;
 - transmitting, over a wireless connection, a voucher validation request from the wireless, portable computer device to a remote wireless interface, said remote wireless interface connected to a central network computer;
 - conveying the voucher validation request from the remote wireless interface to the central network computer;
 - retrieving a voucher record in a voucher database based upon said voucher identification information;
 - confirming, based on payment information in said voucher record, that the corresponding pay-out voucher has not yet been paid;
 - updating said voucher record to indicate that the pay-out voucher has been paid;

transmitting, via said remote wireless interface, a voucher pay-out approval from said central network computer to a said wireless, portable computer device if said voucher record was found and not yet paid, or else a voucher pay-out disapproval if either said voucher record was not found or else the pay-out voucher was already paid; and

displaying an indication of said voucher pay-out approval or voucher pay-out disapproval on-screen at said wireless, portable computer device.

2. (Amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps of:
reading a pay-out amount from said voucher record;

transmitting, along with said voucher pay-out approval indication, said pay-out amount from the central network computer to said wireless, portable computer device via said remote interface; and

displaying said pay-out amount at said wireless, portable computer device.

3. (Amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

automatically transmitting from an electronic gaming machine, when the pay-out voucher is initially dispensed, said voucher identification information and the pay-out amount to said central network computer through an on-line gaming system connection; and

creating and storing a voucher record in said voucher database in response to said voucher identification information.

4. (Amended) The method of claim 3, wherein said voucher identification information comprises a machine identifier and a time stamp indicating a time at which the pay-out voucher was initially dispensed.

6. (Amended) A system for validating gaming pay-out vouchers dispensed from an electronic gaming machine, the system comprising:

a wireless, portable computer device, said wireless, portable computer device comprising a display, a data input interface, and a radio transceiver;

a remote wireless interface capable of communicating with said radio transceiver;

a central computer connected to said remote wireless interface, said central computer programmed with a voucher verification program; and

a voucher database connected to said central computer;

wherein said voucher verification program receives voucher validation requests electronically from said wireless, portable computer device via said remote wireless interface, confirms the existence of a corresponding voucher record in said voucher database, confirms by checking the voucher record that the pay-out voucher has not yet been paid, updates the voucher record, if unpaid, to reflect that the pay-out voucher has been paid, and sends, via said wireless interface, a voucher pay-out approval indication to said wireless, portable computer device if the pay-out voucher was not yet paid, or else a voucher pay-out disapproval indication to said wireless, portable computer device; and

wherein said wireless, portable computer device receives voucher validation request information relating to pay-out vouchers through its data input interface, transmits voucher validation requests to said central computer via its radio transceiver, and displays voucher pay-out approval and disapproval indications on its display in response to receiving them from said central computer.

7. (Amended) The system of claim 6, wherein said voucher verification program reads a pay-out amount from said voucher record, if unpaid, and sends, via said wireless interface, said pay-out amount to said portable computer device along with said voucher pay-out approval indication; and

wherein said wireless, portable computer device displays said pay-out amount on its display.

8. (Amended) The system of claim 6, further comprising a gaming machine interface connected between said central computer and one or more electronic gaming machines, wherein an electronic gaming machine transmits voucher identification information and pay-out amount to said central computer via said gaming machine interface each time a pay-out voucher is dispensed from the

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electronic gaming machine, and wherein said central computer creates and stores a voucher record in said voucher database in response to said voucher identification information.

9. (Amended) The system of claim 8, wherein said voucher identification information comprises a machine identifier and a time stamp indicating a time at which the pay-out voucher was initially dispensed.

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13. (Amended) A method for on-line or off-line validation of gaming pay-out vouchers dispensed from an electronic gaming machine, said method comprising the steps of:

receiving voucher identification information at a wireless, portable computer device, said voucher identification information corresponding to a pay-out voucher dispensed from an electronic gaming machine;

transmitting, over a wireless connection, a voucher validation request from the wireless, portable computer device to a remote wireless interface, said remote wireless interface connected to a central network computer;

conveying the voucher validation request from the remote wireless interface to the central network computer;

attempting to retrieve a voucher record in a voucher database based upon said voucher identification information;

confirming, if said voucher record was retrieved, that the corresponding pay-out voucher has not yet been paid based on payment information in said voucher record, and transmitting, via said remote wireless interface, a voucher pay-out approval from said central network computer to a said wireless, portable computer device if the pay-out voucher was not yet paid, or else a voucher pay-out disapproval if the pay-out voucher was already paid;

displaying, if said voucher record was retrieved, an indication of said voucher pay-out approval or voucher pay-out disapproval on-screen at said wireless, portable computer device;

transmitting, if said voucher record could not be retrieved, a voucher record unavailable indication from said central network computer, via said remote wireless interface, to said wireless, portable computer device;

receiving said voucher record unavailable indication at said wireless, portable computer device and, in response thereto, displaying an off-line error message;

receiving a voucher amount at said wireless, remote computer device after displaying said off-line error message;

transmitting said voucher amount and said voucher identification information, via said wireless interface, to said central network computer from said wireless, portable computer device; and

preparing a voucher database reconciliation record at said central network computer for updating said voucher database at a subsequent time to reflect that the pay-out voucher has been paid.

14. (Amended) The method of claim 13, further comprising the step of, in connection with transmitting said voucher pay-out approval to said wireless, portable computer device, updating said voucher record to indicate that the pay-out voucher has been paid,

16. (Amended) The method of claim 13, further comprising the steps of:
transmitting from an electronic gaming machine, when the pay-out voucher is initially dispensed, said voucher identification information and the pay-out amount to said central network computer; and

creating and storing a voucher record in said voucher database in response to said voucher identification information.

17. (Amended) The method of claim 16, wherein said voucher identification information comprises a machine identifier and a time stamp indicating a time at which the pay-out voucher was initially dispensed.

SUBS 1
19. (Amended) A system for validating gaming pay-out vouchers dispensed from an electronic gaming machine, the system comprising:

a plurality of wireless, portable computer devices, each of said wireless, portable computer devices comprising a display, a data input interface, and a radio transceiver;

a remote wireless interface capable of communicating with the radio transceivers of said wireless, portable computer devices and distinguishing transmissions therefrom;

a central computer connected to said remote wireless interface, said central computer programmed with a voucher verification program; and

a voucher database connected to said central computer;

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wherein said voucher verification program receives voucher validation requests electronically from said wireless, portable computer devices via said remote wireless interface, confirms the existence of a corresponding voucher record in said voucher database for each received voucher validation request, confirms from the voucher database that the pay-out voucher has not yet been paid, updates the voucher record, if unpaid, to reflect that the pay-out voucher has been paid, and sends, via said wireless interface, a voucher pay-out approval indication to the wireless, portable computer device originally sending the voucher validation request if the pay-out voucher was not yet paid, or else a voucher pay-out disapproval indication; and

wherein each wireless, portable computer device transmitting a voucher validation request receives the voucher validation request information relating to pay-out vouchers through its data input interface, transmits voucher validation requests to said central computer via its radio transceiver, and displays voucher pay-out approval and disapproval indications on its display in response to receiving them from said central computer.

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21. (Amended) The system of claim 19, further comprising a gaming machine interface connected between said central computer and one or more electronic gaming machines, wherein an electronic gaming machine transmits voucher identification information and pay-out amount to said central computer via

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said gaming machine interface each time a pay-out voucher is dispensed from the electronic gaming machine, and wherein said central computer creates and stores a voucher record in said voucher database in response to said voucher identification information.

22. (Amended) The system of claim 21, wherein said voucher identification information comprises a machine identifier and a time stamp indicating a time at which the pay-out voucher was initially dispensed.

Please add the following new claims:

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24. (New) A system for validating pay-out vouchers dispensed from electronic gaming machines, the system comprising:

a central computer;

a pay-out voucher database accessible to said central computer, storing pay-out voucher information from a plurality of electronic gaming machines;

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a plurality of wireless computer devices adapted for manual transport, each of said wireless computer devices comprising a display, a data input interface, and a wireless transceiver; and

a wireless interface communicatively coupled to said central computer, capable of communicating with the wireless transceivers of said wireless computer devices;

wherein said central computer receives validation requests electronically from said wireless computer devices via said wireless interface, confirms by checking the pay-out voucher database that a given pay-out voucher has not yet been paid, and sends to the wireless computer device that sent the voucher validation request, via said wireless interface, either a voucher pay-out approval indication or else a voucher pay-out disapproval indication depending upon whether the pay-out voucher was previously paid; and

wherein each of said wireless computer devices is configured to receive pay-out voucher identification information through its data input interface, to transmit

voucher validation requests to said central computer via its wireless transceiver in response to receiving the pay-out voucher identification information through its data input interface, and to display voucher pay-out approval and disapproval indications from the central computer on its display.

25. (New) The system of claim 24, wherein said central computer updates the pay-out voucher database when sending a pay-out approval indication to reflect that the pay-out voucher has been paid.

26. (New) The system of claim 24, wherein said central computer and electronic gaming machines are connected in an on-line gaming system configuration, the system further comprising a gaming machine interface via which the electronic gaming machines convey voucher identification information and voucher pay-out amounts to the pay-out voucher database when pay-out vouchers are dispensed from the electronic gaming machines.

27. (New) A system for facilitating real-time validation of pay-out vouchers dispensed from electronic gaming machines so as to assist gaming floor personnel, the system comprising:

a central computer;

a gaming machine interface via which a plurality of electronic gaming machines convey voucher identification information and voucher pay-out amounts when pay-out vouchers are dispensed from the electronic gaming machines;

a voucher database accessible to said central computer for storing the voucher identification information and voucher pay-out amounts from the electronic gaming machines;

a wireless interface communicatively coupled to said central computer; and

a plurality of wireless computer devices adapted for manual transport, each of said wireless computer devices comprising

a data input interface configured to receive manually or semi-manually entered pay-out voucher identification information based

upon information present on the pay-out vouchers dispensed from the electronic gaming machines;

a wireless transceiver configured to communicate with said central computer via said wireless interface and transmit voucher validation requests thereby, and to receive validation responses from the central computer, and

a display configured to display information pertaining to the validation responses received from the central computer.

28. (New) The system of claim 27, wherein said central computer receives the validation requests electronically from said wireless computer devices via said wireless interface, confirms by checking the voucher database that a given pay-out voucher has not yet been paid, and sends to the wireless computer device that sent the voucher validation request, via said wireless interface, either a voucher pay-out approval indication or else a voucher pay-out disapproval indication depending upon whether the voucher was previously paid.

29. (New) The system of 27, wherein said pay-out voucher identification information is entered via said data input interface through a keyboard, keypad, mouse, or stylus.

30. (New) The system of 27, wherein said pay-out voucher identification information is entered via said data input interface through an optical scanner.

31. (New) A method for validating gaming pay-out vouchers dispensed from an electronic gaming machine, comprising the steps of:

receiving at a central network computer, from an electronic gaming machine, voucher pay-out transaction information including a voucher identifier and a pay-out amount corresponding to a pay-out voucher dispensed from the electronic gaming machine;

creating and storing a voucher record in a voucher database in response to said voucher pay-out transaction information;

receiving by manual or semi-manual input said voucher identifier at a wireless, portable computer device;

transmitting, over a wireless connection, a voucher validation request from the wireless, portable computer device to a remote wireless interface, said remote wireless interface connected to the central network computer;

conveying the voucher validation request from the remote wireless interface to the central network computer;

retrieving a voucher record in a voucher database in response to said voucher validation request;

confirming from the voucher record that the corresponding pay-out voucher has not yet been paid;

updating said voucher record to indicate that the pay-out voucher has been paid;

transmitting, via said remote wireless interface, a voucher pay-out approval from the central network computer to a said wireless, portable computer device if said voucher record was found and not yet paid, or else a voucher pay-out disapproval if either said voucher record was not found or if the pay-out voucher was already paid; and

displaying an indication of said voucher pay-out approval or voucher pay-out disapproval at said wireless, portable computer device.

32. (New) The method of claim 31, further comprising the steps of:

reading a pay-out amount from said voucher record;

transmitting, along with said voucher pay-out approval indication, said pay-out amount from the central network computer to said wireless, portable computer device via said remote wireless interface; and

displaying said pay-out amount at said wireless, portable computer device.